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1/31/2007 Minutes

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

January 31, 2007

Present: Ann LeRoyer (Chair), Lisa Decker, Joey Glushko, Elizabeth Karpati, Patsy Kraemer, Leslie Mayer, Adam Paechter, David White, and guests Jack Johnson of the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) and Ralph Willmer of VHB Consultants.

The minutes of the January 3 meeting were approved after some clarifications.

Proposed Path along Alewife Brook:

· Jack Johnson reported on the proposed path, part of the Alewife master plan, to be built on DCR land along the brook. It would be a kind of nature trail, unpaved, but providing access from East Arlington to Alewife Station. · The major part of the path would be on the Arlington side, but at St. Paul's Cemetery there is no room between it and the brook, so that part of the path would have to cross over to the Somerville side. · ABAC has endorsed the concept of the path but acknowledges that part of it is controversial: Sunnyside residents are opposed because the path would run over land subject to flooding by CSO-contaminated water. The Board of Selectmen is sympathetic to their concerns, and ABAC fears the BoS may oppose the whole project because of this. · DCR seems willing to coordinate the path project and CSO remediation but is unlikely to proceed without community support, because without it the necessary federal funds would be hard to get. BoS could support part of the proposal and oppose just the Sunnyside section. The ultimate DCR vision is to have paths on both shores, with the one on the Somerville side being paved, i.e., not a nature trail. · The Open Space Committee has been asked to write a letter of support for at least the concept of the path. Joey will write the first draft, acknowledging the concerns that have been raised. ABAC is also writing a letter; the two should be coordinated.

February 12 Forum:

· Ralph Willmer presented an outline of plans for this meeting to present the Open Space Plan to the public and ask for input to the revisions being made. The Goals and Objectives of the current plan will be discussed; they can be validated and/or adjusted. · VHB will prepare a summary of the meeting, which could be put on the Town website after review by the committee, along with the Powerpoint presentation from the meeting. · Publicity: Arlington Advocate (Ann), Town website (Ralph), e-mail lists of groups that may be interested and announcements at their meetings (various members); schools, park bulletin boards. ·

Census survey has had a good response but replies have not yet been tallied. More replies should be requested at the forum, and results reported at a second public meeting to be held later in the spring. ·

Ann mentioned some things being discussed on the "Arlington list" that may come up at the forum: Sale of Town property or open space, e.g. the Mt. Gilboa house; the proposed Alewife path and CSO overflows in the Sunnyside area; potential relocation of a fire station to Summer St.; dog park issues; parking; possibility of raising fees; Symmes property;

the Community Preservation Act; maintenance and funding for it; rink and pool. Joey noted that it is important to define open space vs. recreational facilities, and public vs. private open space.

Other matters:

· At our March 7 meeting, review the forum and set a date for the next one. · Ann has submitted the annual Open Space committee report to the Town. · For the next Open Space Plan the needs analysis has to be reviewed – Leslie will meet with Joe Connally. All committee members should take a look at Section 9 vs. other sections, especially #2, and send any comments to Ann. · Adam announced that his term has just expired and he will not seek to have it renewed, but will serve until a successor is appointed, and is willing to continue to work on the Open Space Plan revision.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Karpati